

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 226125

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ORIGIN COME-00

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 SS-20 EB-11 DODE-00 MC-02

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 /070 R

66604

DRAFTED BY COM/BIC/OED/MEPD/STR:SSLEON

APPROVED BY EB/OCA/REP:BEBYRON

COM/BIC/OED/MEPD:JMSANDS

EB/OA/AVP:JSILBERSTEIN

DODE/SDAA:MGMACDONALD (SUBS)

STATE/EUR/WE:EJBEIGEL (SUBS)

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R 152317Z NOV 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

INFO AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 226125

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BMEP, BE

SUBJ: MAJOR PROJECT - REPLACEMENT AIRCRAFT FOR F-104

REF: BRUSSELS 6431, IR 6807032373 (NOTAL)

1. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE BELGIUM EVALUATION FOR SELECTION OF A REPLACEMENT AIRCRAFT FOR THE PRESENT INVENTORY OF F-104G'S INDICATES A SENSE OF URGENCY. UNDERSTAND DATE DESIRED AT CABINET NOW DEC. 15 VICE END DECEMBER 1973. ONE COULD SPECULATE AS TO FACTORS THAT BEAR ON THIS INDICATED URGENCY HOWEVER, BELIEVE EMBASSY MAY BE ABLE TO ASCERTAIN FOLLOWING:

A. WHAT POLITICAL FACTORS MAY HAVE CAUSED THIS URGENT NEED FOR CABINET REVIEW?

B. IS IN COUNTRY WORK LOAD IN AEROSPACE, ENGINE AND ELECTRONIC INDUSTRIES SUCH THAT PLANS FOR NEW PROJECTS
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NEED TO BE FIRMED UP SHORTLY?

C. COULD DESIRE OF GOB TO BE FIRST TO SELECT A REPLACEMENT AIRPLANE BE INFLUENCING THIS URGENCY?

D. WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT THAT REPORT BE TO CABINET BY DEC. 15?

2. BELGIUM SELECTION AND ANNOUNCEMENT COULD HAVE GREAT INFLUENCE ON SELECTION BY OTHER COUNTRIES NOW REVIEWING SAME REQUIREMENT.

3. EARLY SELECTION OF TRAINER REPLACEMENT NOT CONSIDERED PROBABLE BY SOME SOURCES DUE NO LINE ITEM IN CURRENT GOB BUDGET. HOWEVER, QUICK ACTION DID OCCUR. DOES THIS INDICATE THAT SIMILAR ACTION MIGHT OCCUR IN SELECTION OF FIGHTER TO REPLACE F-104G'S?

4. FOR BRUSSELS AND THE HAGUE. CONTINUATION OF STRONG SUPPORT OF U.S. EFFORTS BY EMBASSY AND MAAG IS COMMENDED.

GDS-3. 1 DEC. 79. RUSH

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